

Message Text

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SUBJECT: GDR CULTURAL DELEGATION TO DRESDEN ART OPENING
IN WASHINGTON

REFS: (A) USICA 7535, (B) ALEXANDER/ARNOLD TELCON 5/22/78

SUMMARY: IN PRE-DEPARTURE DINNER AT RESIDENCE FOR GDR
CULTURAL DELEGATION, MINISTER OF CULTURE HOFFMANN
EXPRESSED GREAT ANTICIPATION FOR HIS FIRST VISIT TO THE
US, WHERE HE HOPED TO BROADEN HIS CULTURAL
HORIZONS BY ABSORBING AMERICAN CULTURAL LIFE, AND TO
EXPAND CULTURAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES. HOFFMANN
ALSO REPORTED THE DROPPING OUT OF WILLI SITTE FROM THE GDR
DELEGATION, THEREBY REDUCING THE OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION
TO THREE. END SUMMARY

1. AMBASSADOR AND MRS. BOLEN HOSTED A DINNER ON MAY 23 FOR
THE GDR CULTURAL DELEGATION LEAVING ON MAY 29 TO ATTEND
THE NATIONAL GALLERY OPENING OF THE "SPLENDOR OF DRESDEN"
ART EXHIBIT IN WASHINGTON. MINISTER OF CULTURE HANS-
JOACHIM HOFFMANN, WHO CAME TOGETHER WITH PROFESSOR
BACHMANN AND DR. TAUTZ, ANNOUNCED WITH REGRET THAT THE
FOURTH MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION, PAINTER WILLI SITTE, WAS
WITHDRAWING FROM THE DELEGATION ON GROUNDS OF HEALTH AND
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WORK. OTHER GDR GUEST INCLUDED DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER
GRUNERT AND MFA CULTURAL DIRECTOR MERKEL.

2. IN HIS TOAST, AMBASSADOR WELCOMED BOTH DRESDEN
OPENING AND MINISTER'S VISIT AS MAJOR STEPS IN DEVELOPING
BILATERAL CULTURAL RELATIONS, REVIEWED US CULTURAL EVENTS
PAST (STRAND EXHIBIT), IN PROGRESS (FILM WEEK AND

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN) AND YET TO COME (COMPOSERS STRING QUARTET), AND LOOKED AHEAD TO EVEN MORE ADVANCED LEVEL IN 1979 AND YEARS TO FOLLOW.

3. IN HIS RESPONSE AND IN LATER CONVERSATIONS, HOFFMANN SPOKE OF HIS GREAT EXPECTATIONS IN THIS HIS FIRST VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES, "A COUNTRY WHICH HAS MADE SUCH ENDURING CONTRIBUTIONS TO WORLD CULTURE," AND OF HIS DESIRE TO ABSORB AND LEARN ABOUT AMERICAN CULTURAL LIFE. HOFFMANN WAS IN EXPANSIVE MOOD THROUGHOUT EVENING AND STRESSED GDR'S WISH BROADEN BILATERAL CULTURAL RELATIONS, MENTIONING ORCHESTRAL AND OPERATIC ENSEMBLES, MUSEUM EXHIBITS, AND BOOK PROGRAMS. HE EXPRESSED INTENTION RAISE PROBLEMS OF AUTHORS' RIGHTS AND TO SEEK EXPANSION OF TRANSLATIONS OF GDR AUTHORS IN US. HOFFMANN WAS REMINDED MORE THAN ONCE OF EMBASSY'S INTEREST IN US CULTURAL PROGRAMS NEXT YEAR, ESPECIALLY FOR "REFLECTIONS USA" IN BERLIN TV TOWER EXHIBIT HALL. (EMBASSY RECOMMENDS REITERATION THIS AND OTHER POINTS IN WASHINGTON DISCUSSIONS WITH GDR DELEGATION, AS SUMMARIZED IN EMBASSY'S 3047 AND IN STATE'S 114732 WHICH RESPONDED.)

4. HOFFMANN WAS PLEASED TO HEAR FROM AMBASSADOR THAT HIS INTERVIEW HAD APPEARED IN SPECIAL WASHINGTON POST SUPPLEMENT ON DRESDEN EXHIBIT, FOR WHICH EMBASSY THANKS PGM/PPE. MAJOR POINT STRESSED BY HOFFMANN AND REPEATED BY DELEGATION MEMBERS BACHMANN AND TAUTZ WAS THAT DRESDEN ART UNCLASSIFIED

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EXHIBIT REPRESENTED LARGEST SINGLE MUSEUM EXHIBIT EVER SENT FROM ONE CONTINENT TO ANOTHER, THEREBY UNDERLINING IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY GDR TO RELATIONS WITH US.

5. IN DISCUSSING WITHDRAWAL OF SITTE FROM DELEGATION, HOFFMANN AND TAUTZ SAID THIS WOULD NOT RULE OUT POSSIBLE LATER VISIT TO ONE OF OTHER OPENINGS. TAUTZ NOTED THAT GDR EMBASSY WASHINGTON UNAWARE OF SITTE'S WITHDRAWAL SINCE DECISION HAD BEEN MADE ONLY HOURS BEFORE.

6. AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED US SCHEDULE FOR DELEGATION WITH HOFFMANN WHO DISPLAYED CONSIDERABLE GRATITUDE FOR LEVEL AND DETAILS OF PROGRAMS. PAO CONVEYED TO TAUTZ SUBSTANCE REFTELCON, SPECIFICALLY NEED FOR ONE-DAY EXTENSIONS IN NEW YORK AND SAN FRANCISCO BECAUSE OF HEAVY INPUT GDR EMBASSY, AND ASKED TAUTZ RELAY ACCORDINGLY HIS EMBASSY.

7. ON MAY 24 TAUTZ INFORMED PAO THAT LAST LEG OF TRIP, THAT IS, NEW YORK TO WASHINGTON, WILL BE COMPLETED BY GDR EMBASSY CAR, ON RECOMMENDATION OF AMBASSADOR SIEBER. WHEN PAO POINTED OUT THAT THIS MEANT WASHINGTON ARRIVAL TIME OF

APPROXIMATELY 2300, TAUTZ SAID DELEGATION WOULD NOT EXPECT
BE WELCOMED AT THAT LATE HOUR BY ANYONE FROM USG, AND THAT
SIEBER WOULD SO INFORM ICA. AMBASSADOR AND PAO WILL SEE
DELEGATION OFF MAY 29 AT SCHOENEFELD AIRPORT.
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